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MONTGOMERY BELL ACADEMY



CLASS OF



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Commentary

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Comment by Editor Incites Rivalry

Junior Schoolers seen to have nothing better to do than whine about Bell Ringer's superiority



**"Behold the Superfluous: They are always sick.
They vomit their gall, and call it a newspaper."**

F.W. Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Top of the Hill staff gets creative: (left) Uses magazine to write ransom-like note to the Bell Ringer editor-in-chief; (above) gives homage to a German philosopher; and (below) paraphrases a quotation on the entrance of Rome—also used in the movie Gladiator: "When Top of the Hill falls, the orbit of the earth will fall"

By the BELL RINGER Staff

What began as an unoriginal quip has exploded into an all-out rivalry between the schools two mainstream newspapers, the **BELL RINGER** and **TOP OF THE HILL**.

As Gabe Roth, Editor-in-Chief of the Bell Ringer, and his section editors finished having their picture for the yearbook taken on Wednesday morning, April 26, Gabe noticed, out of the corner of his eye, a throng of junior schoolers approaching the steps in the courtyard to assume the position for their picture.

Hidden among the taller boys in the crowd was Teddy Twang, an eighth grader, leading his troops toward the steps. Roth realized that this bunch of ruffians was none other than the staff of Top of the Hill, the middle school newspaper that comes out once in a while.

Taken aback by the obvious air of arrogance displayed by their coat and tie dress and swank demeanor, Roth called out, "Hey, it's the Top of the Hill staff! Look how cool they are!"

"Top of the Hill?" he continued. "More like Flop of the Hill!"

For the Microbe journalists, that last comment was the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, the bombing of Pearl Harbor, or the invasion of Poland or Kuwait because that was the beginning of an all-out war.

In the weeks following Roth's perceived visceral attack (on not only the paper itself but also on everyone associated with it and even its readership), Taiwang and company

got angrier and angrier, as they wondered how they could recover from such a witty and curt remark. They were utterly hopeless.

Enter creativity, which is a characteristic that seems to peak at around age 13 or 14. Using the new Publications' Room facility in their recently renovated Massey Hall, the junior schoolers began to draw pictures on their dry erase board in that room.

**UBI TOH CADIT,
ORBIS TERRÆ
CADET.**

The first day after this idea came to the surface, this message appeared:

WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE:

One certain senior who happens to be Editor of the Bell Ringer.
Known for saying, 'Flop of the Hill.'
a.k.a. Gabe Roth.

Under the "Flop of the Hill" line was a caricature of Gabe. It was not very flattering.

As soon as Roth regarded the ridiculous death threat, he went to action and decided to edit the text and draw some art of his own. It said:

WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE
A certain group of pre-pubescent boys who happen to crack their voice

Known for saying, "I want my mommy" and "Why is my body going through so many changes"
a.k.a. Top of the Hill Staff

Roth drew caricatures of Editor-in-Chief Ted E. Tinewang (short and with a tennis racket), Entertainment

\$45 more for their than we did for each of ours.

"But on another note, the 2000 Bell is almost finished—on time for the first time in recent memory—the 'crobes have their own publications' room, and the Carter Building first floor with its publications' room is almost complete.

"MBA publications have improved this year by an unbelievable amount. However, there is still a ways to go. Silly rivalries like the one between the Bell Ringer and Top of the Hill, the Bell Ringer and the Bell Breaker, the Bell Ringer and the Bell, basically between the Bell Ringer and every on-campus publication besides the Archives, are okay as long as they're in jest and they increase interest. Considering the amount of money MBA has put into other parts of the school, and considering how easily MBA publications could become both enjoyed by more students and nationally recognized, the school better go all-out for the new Publications Room in Carter. So next year, people can dedicate more time to putting out quality newspapers and less time fueling silly rivalries."

Tywang could not be reached for comment; he was busy "playing tennis."

Though the "rivalry" continued into mid-May with more notes, and more board-writing, it is hope of the Bell Ringer staff that the 'crobes learn from one of Mr. Gaither's favorite aphorisms:

Don't bite the hand that feeds you.

ment Editor Charlie Pate (belt buckle the size of Texas), and Staff Writer Ben Pote (formerly of bowl cut fame) to complete his artistic endeavor.

An unidentified accomplice was seen with Roth, but no one knows who it was.

Roth doesn't condemn the so-called "rivalry," but he doesn't endorse it either.

"I think it's important to note," Roth said, "that the Bell Ringer has put out six issues this year, as opposed to five last year, four the year before, and three by both Top of the Hill and the Bell Breaker this year.

"The Bell hasn't even done half as well, as they've only put out one issue of theirs, and they charged

1999-2000 BELL RINGER Staff

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Assistant Editor, 2000
Entertainment Editor, 1999
Sports Editor, 1999-2000
Photography Editor, 1999-2000
Layout Editor, 1999
Layout Editor, 2000
News and Illustrations Editor, 1999
News Editor, 2000
Opinions Editor, 1999
Business Editor, 1999-2000

Special Assignments
Cartooning
Car Reviews
Movie Reviews
Theater Reviews
Writers

Gabe Roth
Thompson Paine
Johnny Sisk
Michael Pass
Steven Syverud
Daniel Rosenbaum
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Kevin Small

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Letters to the editor are encouraged, and can be given to a member of the editorial staff, or sent to ringer@montgomerybell.com. These letters must be signed, but names will be withheld on request. Letters will be edited for length if necessary.

The staff of **The Bell Ringer** prepares all copy, headlines, and photographs at Montgomery Bell Academy. Eveready Printing in Nashville, Tennessee, prints the paper.

Hopes for the New Carter Building

By Gabe Roth
1999-2000 Editor-in-Chief

Come one, come all, and welcome to the grand opening of the new Carter Building. This time around, the building is three stories tall, has more classroom space, a student center, and a publications' room.

There are so many questions being asked about

every month, and section editors who can motivate their staff to turn in good work. The Bell is not my department, but if in the future it's half as good as it is going to be this year, then MBA has something to be proud of.

The student center will get dozens of students out of the library, which currently and ironically is the only

Photograph of the destruction of the old Carter Building provided by Albany / Environment



Dispute. There goes the history office, not to mention 4 classrooms and 2 laboratories.

this new colossus, it is hard to answer them all at once. (Are the toilets going to be automatic flush? Where are the weather vases going to go? Next to the new sundial? Is the history office going to be more than unused closet space? And what about a nice long fire escape?) But I sure can try.

First of all, the publications' room will be, well, a publications' room. No longer will it be an out-of-the-way addition to a senior room (Third Floor of Ball, early 1990-1999) or a dumping ground for old yearbook pictures (1999-present). It will be painted in bright colors by bright people in order to give personality to the one aspect of MBA that can be great but isn't yet.

(Yes, the **Archives** does win awards nationally just about all the time, but they haven't had to suffer in the Ball Building since the staff does its work in the center of the MBA universe, Dr. Botten's classroom.)

The publications' room will not be under-technologized—it will have angle computers, printers, and scanners, all of which are necessary for the **Bell and Bell Ringer**. Nor will it be undermanned. Next year's **Bell Ringer** will have a large staff consisting of staff writers who write one article on their assigned topic per month,

place on campus where students can sit and talk, and into more comfortable chairs where they won't disturb the seventh graders who always seem to invade



Only a pile of bricks (which can be yours for only \$199.99 + \$6.50 shipping)

the upperclassmen's space in the library. Magazines will be read, parties will be planned (but not those cast parties), fantasy football, baseball, and basketball teams will be rated, and NCAA Tournament brackets will be

Continued on page 5

Questioning the Academic Standards

Students—average, below, and above—each feel the strains of the workload at MBA and hope that the administration will address key issues in the near future

Privilege List Hurts Average Students

By Jay Lovell

It's understandable that, in order to set a respectable standard for anything worth respecting, there must be expectations and qualifiers. Sometimes, however, the qualifiers seem misguided and counter-productive.

At MBA, one must draw the line that separates students worthy of receiving privileges and those who, although they may be arguable close, arrive just short of that mark. The 86.0 overall average that must be earned in order for students to meet the requirements of the privilege list does its job by providing a cut off. But the catch is that students must also have above an 80 for each individual class, diminish-

ing the chances of some hard working students who meet the demands of an 86 average but, who are unable to get it together in one class.

So instead, demoralized from receiving no reward for their efforts, students who have managed better than a 86 average muddle back to study hall, for at least one quarter of hell. They are subjected a much worse study environment than the students who have gotten all 80s. Those lucky students have the freedom to ask teachers questions, or during their free periods, work on completing one more dreaded paper, which they are able to write on their own time, without having to get a note for permission to study from every

teacher in the school. Or maybe they've finished all their homework, feel they deserve a break and just want to hang out in the new Ingram Lecture Hall with a couple of guys who are also relieved that they have escaped the "wrath of study hall." For some, who are always consistent in each of their classes (or maybe just picked all the right classes that year), the incentive to keep their grades up in order to get out of study hall is not an issue. But for others, who are able to consistently manage the 86, having a pair of 90s and a pair of 88s with a 76 in history, the system definitely promotes frustration, leading to carelessness. End result: the smart get smarter and the average get the shaft.

Hopes for the New Carter Building and Beyond

Continued from page 4

filled out.

(I did not mention the senior room as a place on campus where students can sit and talk, because if while they are sitting and talking, they happen to

Board of Trustees to the campus.

I've been at MBA for six years, and I can count on one half of one hand the number of times I have seen any member of the Board interact with an MBA student. I realize that it is the administration's job to be in touch with

ings will reveal themselves to all. Pulitzer Prize winners will not read their whole novels to the assembly.

And if the Titans go to the Super Bowl, the whole school is going with them, at least to the parade. Maybe they should call it the Compromise Building.

With all the new classroom space, more courses will be offered at MBA. We have a Rehearsal Room, but no acting class (until the 2000-2001 school year, when one finally is starting). We have a dark room, but no photography class. We have the great outdoors (assuming no more buildings are built), but no ecology or environmental class. A student should be able to sit in on Curriculum Committee meetings and help teachers give more options to students, most of whom could take English IV and one other class their senior year and have all their graduation requirements complete. The new Carter Building will be home to these new classes, from Psychology to Journalism, and help increase awareness by the student body of the world beyond MBA.

The Carter Building will be MBA's fourth greatest asset—behind a Board of Trustees that will be increasingly active in student life, a faculty that will be able to utilize the new facilities to broaden students' desire to learn, and a student body that will be able to realize its full potential.



Once the dust settles, a new, more useful building will be standing

hit the remote to watch, perhaps, their friends who might for some reason be on TV supporting a certain local Super Bowl team, then the nice relaxing place becomes a vortex for demerits to be assessed to unsuspecting and innocent seniors. If you give the seniors a room with a TV in it, they're going to want to turn it on to watch their friends ditching school. It only makes sense.)

The most impressive thing about the Carter Building will be its uncanny ability to attract members of the MBA

and board member. Board members will be on campus more often than for an occasional early morning breakfast or late evening jam session (I realize that they are busy, but... priorities?) and discuss their slants on issues concerning MBA students.

The result of this union will be felt for generations. Students will be able to wear sneakers on dress-down days. Spring Break t-shirts will not have to be full of innuendoes; the hidden mean-

Exams Weighted Too Heavily

By Nick Reid

With the month of May rapidly coming to a halt, MBA's time-honored tradition of spring exams has come and gone and long since stopped circulating in the back of many student's minds.

Frantic preparation, sleepless nights, and one day cram sessions accompanied these three hour tests.

So why do MBA students take exams so seriously?

Because exams here are important. Too important.

The work that students do in 16 weeks of a course cannot be condensed into a three-hour test. Eighty days of intense coursework at MBA means more than three hours in a blue book. What about bad test takers? Aren't they punished enough on standardized tests?

Why make a conscientious, hardworking student who performs well for 80 days suffer at the hands of one test?

Students with an average of 90 or above should be exempt from exams whether they are in regular, honors, or AP classes.

Exams don't punish poor students; they punish the good ones. With an average in the mid- to high-nineties, one's grade can only go down. A student must write a near perfect exam or watch weeks of hard work go up in smoke.

A good exam for a student in the high seventies, however, can help him boost his grade into the eighties, however. This feat is rare.

MBA is a serious academic challenge and getting into college has become an extremely competitive process. With the plethora of standardized testing required for college these days, we have plenty of exams to worry about. Let's not make a difficult situation any worse.

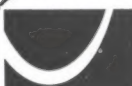
It is time for our school to review this important issue.

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To place an add in the Bell Ringer in the future, contact MBA at 298-5514.

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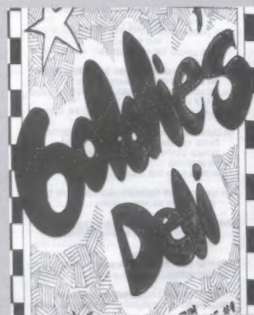
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Macbeth Caps Triumphant Theater Season

Damn Yankees auditions, Annual Banquet highlight final week, anticipate next year

By THE BELL RINGER STAFF

How did the MBA Players cap off four successful nights of the hardest Shakespeare play in terms of the daunting technical aspect and the curse that follows it?

They began auditions for the next show after taking a brief week off.

While *Damn Yankees* is now on the minds of most MBA theater buffs, they have not forgotten the heroic efforts and skill of the cast and crew of *Macbeth*.

The curse that befalls productions of *Macbeth* reared its ugly head a few times, but every confusion, from the inability of the fog to stay put on the floor to the malfunctions of the projector, led to greater successes in the ensuing performance.

Tech rehearsals for the show were slow and complicated, between the frequent blackouts and the constantly changing set, but as sure as

Biram wood came to Dunsinane, Dr. Fuller rallied his actors into some of the best performances in their careers.

Josh Eaves played the ambitious and bloody king Macbeth with an unassuming air and an underlying malice. Eaves abilities as an actor, most recently seen in the *Chicago Conspiracy Trial*, have been apparent for years, but his conquering of a challenging role proved his mettle. The MBA Players will have a void to fill this coming year as Josh heads to Vanderbilt.

The most memorable aspect of Robert Womack's Macduff was his head-carrying in the final scene. (Macduff, having decapitated Macbeth, presents his head to Malcolm, the new king of Scotland.) But Womack's "O, horror!" awoke audiences with the realization that they have just experienced a bloody regicide. His piercing voice and ability to "feel" the murder of his king and of his family "as a man" marked

his success in portraying the hero of the story (not the tragic hero--that's Macbeth, but the hero for all of those who dislike killing kings) and his ability to make his character believable and full of integrity.

Catherine Nading played Lady Macbeth, and it was her descent into insanity that moved the audience night after night. Every performance, the famous speech, "Out, damn spot, out I say" became more poignant, as Nading bared the soul of her character to an audience unsure of whether to feel sympathy for her illness or uncomfortable because of her actions.

Other breakout performances included the host of eighth graders playing messengers, sons of nobles, and soldiers, and Tommy McGinn as Banquo, as McGinn's death and resurrection as a ghost added two more facets to his impressive theater season.

The play was technically stun-

ning (save a few miscues [yay, technology] on opening night) throughout, as a layer of dead bodies and fog hovered about the stage when the curtain was opened for the first scene and blood flew every time someone was killed onstage. The use of caves for the witches and the smooth shifts between the castles of Macbeth, Duncan, and Macduff and the forest showed not only that the actors were doing their part but also that the tech crew had mastered the show, a remarkable way to end the remarkable season.

The Annual Theater Banquet, held at the Eaves' home on Sunday, May 21, was a time to reflect on the season and all its participants. Josh Eaves, Gabe Roth, and Tommy McGinn all received plaques for their work, and Dr. Fuller was given a gift from the MBA Players and their Harpeth Hall and St. Cecilia counterparts for his hard, and rewarding, work.

Good Fight, Good Night: The Bell Ringer Presents FACULTY DEATHMATCH



In this corner, Dr. Batten

By Deke Shearon

On April 20, 2000 In the Year of Our Lord, in MBA's Paschall Theater, a battle of epic proportions took place.

In one corner, a man many would call the most intimidating man this side of Mr. Wims. A man standing about 6'8", about 220 pounds, a man, named Damon Regen. An ex-football player and MBA vet, a man whose very appearance in his trademark periwinkle blazer strikes fear deep into the heart of many an MBA student. A man whose very gait commands respect and rever-

ence. Mr. Regen, a man who teaches Geometry, coaches football, and is the director of the high school. A man who has his own office.

And, in the other corner, stood Dr. Batten.

The fight, contested under WWF Hardcore rules, began with little fanfare, as Dr. Batten stood patiently in his corner, speaking some final words with his trainer and mentor, a photograph of acclaimed author Bernard Malamud. Meanwhile Mr. Regen was simultaneously pouring water on himself, screaming, and, with a Bunsen burner he borrowed from the Ingram Building he himself laid bricks for, burning his arm in true Travis Bickle style, hardening himself for his upcoming contest.

Finally, "Ravishing" Regen lost patience with the Battman. He charged not unlike Bald Bull from Mike Tyson's Punchout, his eyes glazed over and pupils dilated, his arms and legs converging in one smooth motion as he ran from the east side of the theater to the west, panting and ululating like an African Queen. At the last second, the master marksman Batten sidestepped the behemoth, who promptly ran square into the turnbuckle.

Stoic Batten did not take this opportunity for granted and began running for the door. However, what he did

not count on, were the telekinetic powers of the wily Damon, given to him by his Technicolor Sportcoat. Batten was thrown to the floor, convulsing as Darth Damon pointed at his throat and began choking him.

"You'll never defeat me, Wayne," the director of the high school said as he lightened the choke; he wanted to savor this assured victory some more. He began levitating the English man, cackling madly to himself and surreally singing the MBA Alma Mater.

"Oooooooooooooon and ooooooooooon, hahahahahahah, faiiiiiiiiiiiiithfulllllllly....haaaaaaaail Montgomery Be—"

Just then, a sharp steel chair rang against the back of Mr. Regen. Batten quickly fell to the ground as the telekinetic stalled. Regen slowly regained his senses and began to get up and see what traitor, what vile human being it was that betrayed him in such a fashion. What he saw would amaze him more than anything he had seen before.

Mr. Julian Jones.

Before Mr. Regen could coherently gather his senses, the steel chair again rang hard on his head, as Mr. Jones steel-baptized him again. Now Batten joined in on the fun, seizing the opportunity with ferocity and grabbing a nearby faux-tree, so common in the



And in the other corner, Mr. Regen

theater, and beating Mr. Regen about it with the head and shoulders. The pin was just a formality, as Dr. Batten pressed the man's shoulders to the mat for an easy 1-2-3, counted by the predetermined referee for the match, the dependably honest Mrs. Beatrice O'Connell.

After the match, Dr. "Bruce" Wayne Batten handed Mr. Jones a crisp \$100.

Mr. Jones inquired, "What are we going to do tomorrow, Wayne?"

Dr. Batten replied, "Why, Jules, we're going to take over the world."

8

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Class of



The Senior Prank: A Photoessay from the Beach

Pranksters (clockwise, from upper left): Some took the time to relax; others wanted to connect with nature and their friends in the animal kingdom. The Class of 2000 pulled out all the stops for their senior prank, including turning the head of Wixley Williams' pickup truck into a fourth baby pond, and when it was time to clean up, even the administration pitched in. The greatest excitement of the day: besides the 2 a.m. security guards, the 5:30 a.m. visit from the Belle Meade Police—followed shortly by an appearance from Mr. Goo—was provided by the water balloon launcher; underclassmen (and the Wallace Building) didn't stand a chance. For those who thought last year's prank could not be topped, the Class of 2000 came through: everyone was involved, nothing was destroyed (besides the egos of a few freshmen who had to take a little swim in the baby pond after thinking they could outdo the seniors), the clean-up was easy, and it was one mad and wild time.

